

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

No. 125

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Forty Millions—Mostly Fools

It is fifty years since dear old crusty Carlyle breathed his last. It is near a hundred years since the sage of Chelsea uttered the above profound commentary on his contemporaries.

Were Carlyle's fellowmen any different from the people of to-day? Have we progressed? Are the people saner? Or have the fools of Carlyle's time just bred and multiplied?

Truly these are serious questions. We have come through an election, Gilbertian in its setting and ludicrous in its result. Who but a fool would seriously contend that the people have got what they wanted?

What was the issue of this election? Was it tariffs? Was it Socialism? Was it the Government's policy? Was it the late Government's record? Or was there any issue other than an appeal to the blind folly of forty millions, mostly fools?

We were told again and again that tariffs were not the issue. Socialism hardly came in for serious discussion. Government policy was a blank cheque. As for the late Government's record, how can the result be taken as a verdict upon that issue when the head and front of the late Government, and its chief adornments and apologists, are returned to trust and power with an unprecedented majority?

If Socialism was condemned how then does one explain Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's profession of this faith? If it was not condemned why then the wholesale defeat of so many who stood for it? Truly this election result is the verdict of fools. Even more truly can it be said that it is no verdict at all, but just a plain example of the ancient Grecian saw

WHOM THE GODS WOULD DESTROY THEY FIRST MAKE MAD.

* * * *

The workers of this country in their day of madness have set back the hands of time. We must not deceive ourselves in this matter. It was the votes of the workers which returned the "National" Government to power. We know now where the madness lies. Actually more workers voted "National" than voted Labour. There are more fools than sane. And so we may test Carlyle's dictum by the light of time.

Yet the old man of Chelsea was too sweeping. In 1931 we can amend his figures—there are seven million folk in this land who retained their reason. The fire of the gods, and the garbage of the man with the muck rake—no weapon was too emblematic or too dirty to use against us; yet here we are—seven million—seven million of the best!

* * * *

Looking calmly at the result is there anything to despair of?

When, in all history, did a Party before enter a contest so betrayed by its leaders, so forced to the defensive, and compelled to fight on the chosen ground of its enemies? These seven millions are solid indeed. These will be the veterans and the vanguard in the new armies we shall now form to march again to the Socialist Jerusalem of the workers.

There are many lessons to be learnt from defeat, but not the least of them is that while Carlyle might have been right for his time, and right in part for our time, the number of the sane is a goodly one.

Our job is to bring sanity to the multitude; clarity where there is fog; hope and justice even to those who sold their birthright; and victory, in time, to the Socialist Cause. And we shall do it!

THE MORNING AFTER

An Editorial Review of the General Election.

Well, what do you think about it? In asking that question we merely pass on the query which has been shot at us by friends and foes hundreds of times during the last fortnight. Indeed the morbid promptings of so many friends who have put this question at every available opportunity have rather got on our nerves. Some people *love* to talk of funerals and of their departed dead. But there is a brighter side to the election result than the loss of over two hundred seats and the whole Labour Front Bench, and we invite our readers to pick out the lessons to be gained from the late election and send in their views for publication next month. Meantime we review the field of battle and give our readers a lead with our own observations.

Did the Movement Fail?

One of the features of the election, and one which will puzzle future historians and students of politics, was the remarkable rally of the Labour Movement and the extraordinary enthusiasm the Movement displayed throughout the fight.

It is acknowledged on all hands that "the Movement was splendid." This is not to say that there were not exceptions or places where depression reigned, but taken as a whole the Party throughout the country entered into the fight and carried on the contest just as whole-heartedly and enthusiastically and as confident in itself as at any election in its history. Supreme sacrifices were made both in money and in service, and if the atmosphere in our Local Parties, Committee Rooms and even at meetings had been a true criterion of the situation, Labour should at least have held its own.

These facts have puzzled many people in our Movement, yet they are simple of explanation, and the lesson they point is of tremendous importance though it is no new one.

What is the Movement? Who is it? What is its numerical strength? The "Movement" in its broadest sense may be said to comprise the individual and Socialist membership of the Labour Party, the officership and active membership of the Trades Union Movement, and a considerable section beyond consisting of sympathisers who are attached to the Party in various degrees of affinity ranging from mere

attendance at meetings, to active work during elections.

An outside estimate of the numerical strength of the Labour Movement would be three to four million persons. Its active supporters would be much less than half this number.

Now compare these figures with Labour's vote and we begin to appreciate the possibility of occasions when the Movement and its vote may be of two different minds, *and this is precisely the outstanding fact of the election.*

What are the facts? The Labour Movement, to the astonishment of observers throughout the world, saw its Government go out of office actually with a sigh of relief—certainly with ill-concealed satisfaction. It saw its Party in the House go into opposition with the feeling that that action had saved its soul, and in the weeks before the election there was a tremendous revival of enthusiasm *in the Movement*; the idea in everybody's mind that we must get back to real Socialist propaganda and proposals acted as a spur and a tonic and it is not too much to say that the Labour Movement entered the election in an exalted state of mind. It was back to its ideals and fighting for their fulfilment.

But the great Labour vote of 1929 had not reacted to these impulses. Unlike the Movement itself it had not shaken off the influence of the Labour leaders who deserted. The vote itself was exposed to the effects of the terrific propaganda of the capitalist press and the reiterated appeals to national patriotism. Can it be wondered at that the Movement's hold on its vote weakened, that it lost a million and a half voters and made no progress?

Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.

The writing on the wall needs no Daniel to expound. If the figures we have given are an accurate computation, we once again have to recognise that there is yet a gigantic margin between the numerical strength of the Movement and the vote to which it has attained. Has not the "Labour Organiser" pointed to this fact again and again, as the most profound danger to which the Movement was exposed? And have not events justified the warning?

The pendulum may swing back—our voters may return. We may indeed

profit by the errors of the present Government, and some day even reverse the figures of the late election. But that will not be a permanent advance. The reverse we have experienced may occur again, and the danger will always be there until we have bridged the gap that exists between our Movement and our vote. There is one way to do this, and that is to extend our membership both industrial and political, and the whole attention of the Movement must be concentrated on this great object in the coming years.

Why the Prophets were Wrong.

We have not yet found the prophet brazen enough to say "I told you so," nor we believe have the enemy produced such a person. The Election result was a complete surprise.

But why was there such confidence in our ranks in so many places? One candidate told us he would get a ten thousand majority. He actually got a little more — but on the wrong side. Many others showed absolute confidence in their ability to hold their seats and probably in over 100 constituencies which were lost, the confidence of candidate and agent was not shaken till late on the day of the poll.

We believe the explanation is to be sought in the facts which we have recounted above. Our prophets moved among the Movement. They caught the general atmosphere of exaltation, but the chill outside was not sensed simply because our enthusiasts do not move amongst it as they move among our own people. We have already indicated the remedy.

A Word about the Quitters.

What was the influence on our Movement of the desertion by Messrs MacDonald, Snowden, Thomas and the lesser fry who went with them?

So far as our Movement is concerned the evidence in our possession is overwhelming that these desertions made no serious impression on Labour Party ranks. Some of these losses did not even discourage, or dismay us, and there is not a handful of constituencies in the country where it can be said with truth that any persons of importance in the Party left our ranks to join the "National Labour" Cause.

This again is a fact of outstanding significance. Mr. MacDonald may sneer in the House of Commons at "the section of the Labour Party" which confronts him as an Opposition, but the fact remains that in the country the Labour Movement is 99.9 behind the

official Labour Party and this circumstance will count for much both as regards the future of our Party and, what is of lesser importance, the future of Mr. MacDonald and his supporters themselves.

But among our vote as distinct from our Movement there were losses. Probably we are right in believing that of the votes we lost (nearly 1,500,000) the greater number were lost not to tariffs, to "patriotism" or Tory propaganda, but to the confusion created by the "Quitters." A surer hold upon our vote by way of membership would clearly have obviated this loss.

What the Stampede Did.

We suppose it will not be seriously denied even by our opponents that the result was largely obtained by stampede. The by-elections had indicated no such great turnover of votes as took place. The election was won and lost in the time "between the receipt of the writ for the election and the day of the poll."

Who among the electors were most readily stampeded? We believe that apart from the commercial classes who had already made up their minds, the women electors succumbed to the greatest degree. Every election agent we have spoken to confirms this opinion while at the same time paying tribute to the magnificent work which the women did who were attached to the Movement.

But the fact is capable of explanation. The male Labour vote is largely a Trades Union vote, and, guided by its leaders, the intelligent and active section of Trades Unionists voted Labour, as they were expected to do. There is no such steadying influence among the mass of British women. They were stampeded by the Press and at least one remedy one perceives is that still greater endeavours must be made among Trade Unionists to discourage the purchase of Capitalist newspapers in their homes and encourage the circulation of the "Daily Herald." The other remedy is obviously yet more propaganda and membership among the women.

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Our Mass Vote.

There are a number of constituencies in the country where Labour has little political organisation of the orthodox kind, but has been able time after time to secure striking victories merely because of the overwhelming preponderance of our people. These areas are principally mining. It is this type of area which has retained for Labour a big proportion of the present representation in the House of Commons. Indeed it might almost be said that Labour's victories were in adverse proportion to the strength of its political machine!

It is easy to draw a wrong moral here. It might even be thought that by greater concentration on mass conversion Labour could discard the ordinary political machinery because its masses could be relied upon to vote when the time came. But this is an idle dream for generations to come. Though it be true that there are dozens of constituencies wherein it is only necessary to ring a bell to bring voters to the poll, the psychology of the rest of them is altogether different.

Besides, how many seats did Labour lose where it had relied on its mass vote at previous Elections? The toll is a heavy one. We probably lost more of such seats than we held, and those we retained were in many cases held by narrow margins.

It is clear then that past complacency and indifference to scientific organisation in these constituencies will have to give way to better methods. The beginning must be made soon for there is the further fact that by the neglect of political organisation and political membership in such places a tremendous wastage takes place of financial possibilities. We know of constituencies with over 25,000 Labour voters which do not produce £10 in membership fees in a whole year.

The Candidates.

We believe it will be conceded that the personnel of the official Labour candidates was superior to that in any past Election. The truly working class type of candidate was of a higher standard, and the intellectuals have suffered a considerable weeding during the last two years so that the candidates representative of this section were all doubtless thoroughly sincere and dead loyal to the Cause.

But there were a large number of late selections, and a larger number of seats unfought than in 1929. There

were of course misfits, and the question must arise in the near future whether the Party's present methods of finding candidates and placing them are the best. Only those in close contact with the more difficult constituencies can appreciate the heart-rending task which some of our comrades had in finding a standard bearer. There are indeed stout hearts in some of these places, and it is a singular circumstance too that one frequently finds more efficiently conducted Local Parties in hopeless areas than in the more favourable districts.

Did the whole of Labour's forces in the way of candidates take the field? The answer is no. There are people on Labour's lists of candidates who have been on the list for five years, who have been invited time and time again, but who yet remain unplaced. What are they waiting for? Why have they refused so many invitations? We believe that it is high time that the names of people who will not accept invitations extended to them should be struck out of the available lists.

The Election Agents.

There is no doubt also that Labour put into the field a more competent body of election agents than on any previous occasion.

Some of the successful trainees under the Labour Party Scheme for Study and Examination got their first baptism of fire. We should be concealing the truth, however, if we do not say that immense improvement is still possible in the competence of the Labour Party's agents. This matter will have to receive attention, not of course by way of criticism or censure, but by affording better opportunities for the study of organisational and electioneering methods. More conferences of agents are called for and the opportunity should be afforded for the more competent agents to explain their methods to others.

The Election Literature.

We do not consider that Labour's Election literature was this time up to standard. This may be accounted for in part by the circumstances of the election; its hurried nature and its confusing issues. But where is the co-ordination which ought to take place among neighbours, and at least among divisions of the same borough or county? Is there too much individualism and too few individuals who can excel in this direction?

The time has arrived when at least certain standardisations are possible. In adjoining constituencies we saw election addresses ordered in almost identically similar form and quantities yet differing vastly in quality of production and effectiveness. Will not some agents at least get together in front of an election and agree upon a standardised get-up for their area, placing the order with one competent printer? This should result in great saving and we have mentioned but one direction in which something could be done.

The election news sheet was again adopted in an increased number of contests. But in what a variety of shapes and get-up, not to say quality of contents! Have we no people willing to devote attention to this matter for a given area, or group of constituencies? Here is but one more direction in which co-operation is necessary.

The Canvass.

It is generally admitted that less canvassing took place on the present occasion than at most elections. Again the circumstances of the election afford some excuse. Is there, however, a growing fatalism in this matter and an increasing feeling in some quarters that our vote will poll without being looked after? If so, the result of the election should undeceive those who think this. If ever there was an election in which it was desirable to reach the people at their doorsteps this was one. All the forces of the enemy which make canvassing necessary were at work with greater venom than ever, particularly the Press. It is just childishness to pretend that our one daily paper is sufficient antidote for the overwhelming circulations and unscrupulousness of its competitors. This question of canvassing must be taken up anew and efforts made to prevent a repetition of the failure we have to record.

Meetings and Speakers.

As already indicated Labour meetings during the contest were almost everywhere of a surprisingly enthusiastic character. The inference to be drawn, in face of the general result, confirms the view always expressed by experienced electioneers that meetings do not win elections, and only touch the fringe of the crowd. One draws also the conclusion that our meetings consisted mainly of our own immediate supporters and enthusiasts. A unanimous meeting is in fact looked upon as

a token of success rather than evidence of our failure to attract the people we want to convert. In future we shall have to give serious attention to means by which the unconverted can be attracted to our meetings.

In the Rushcliffe Division of Notts. where the fight was waged under particularly adverse circumstances, good results accrued from calling meetings expressly for the purpose of answering questions by opponents. We looked in at one such meeting. A great section of the audience was hostile and questions came fast and furious, but it was obvious the answers were telling and the experiment most certainly justified itself.

As to speakers, the great cry from the constituencies was for National Speakers. And where could they be found? Perhaps Burnley itself could have been saved but for the calls made upon the Party leader by the rest of the country. And so it was with the others. They were wanted at home.

The contest once again discloses the failure of Local Parties to build up their speaking resources. There were of course many honourable exceptions, but as a whole the Movement looks too much to other parts of the country and when everybody is engaged in their own contest the pinch is felt. Speakers' classes are an urgent need and so are opportunities for our young and inexperienced supporters to express themselves in public. We must cure ourselves of the theatrical demand for stars. We believe the public can be made to attend Labour meetings even when the programme contains no big lettered names. At any rate the task of making Labour meetings a sufficient draw in themselves must be attempted.

(To be concluded next month.)

SOLD OUT.

Will readers who have unsoiled and *unfolded* copies of the "L.O." for October please return to the Editor. Full allowance made.

The October issue was sold out in two days.



QUESTIONS ANSWERED HERE

A Nomination Objected to.

Question. At our recent Municipal Elections a Tory objection to one of our nomination papers was upheld because the town name was omitted in giving the candidate's place of abode. Will you please give your opinion on this point?

Answer. We are of the opinion that on the face of it the candidate's place of abode was insufficiently given, and if an objection was lodged we should expect such objection to be upheld. On the other hand, if faced with such an eventuality ourselves we should have answered the objection by referring the Returning Officer to Section 241 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, which reads:—

"No misnomer or inaccurate description of any person . . . in any roll, list, notice or voting paper required by this Act shall hinder the full operation of this Act with respect to that person . . . provided the description . . . be such as to be commonly understood."

We are afraid our defence would have been somewhat thin, but at the same time a well-disposed returning officer might disallow the objection on the ground stated, though there are no decisions expressly applying this Section to nomination papers.

We might alternatively claim that the objection was frivolous, and one or two cases given in Arnold's "Law of Municipal Corporations" bearing out this contention might be cited. But as indicated, we should not be very hopeful of success, though where an objection was lodged that a person signed a paper as Henry D. Davenport, though he appeared in the roll as Henry D. Evereux Davenport, Mr. Justice Matthew dismissed the objection as "frivolous," saying that the Section 241, above quoted, was intended to cover just such a case as this.

The incident shows the absolute

necessity for the minute examination of nomination papers in every particular prior to their presentation.

A Chauffeur's Employment.

Question. We have two cars helping us during the campaign. No. 1 is lent gratuitously by a supporter for the use of the candidate and is driven about by his (the candidate's) gardener. No. 2 belongs to the candidate and is driven about by a person employed by me, as agent. It is used for carrying speakers and parcels about.

I want to use No. 2 on polling day for carrying voters to the poll. Can I do so? If not, is there any way I could get over the 'legal objection'?

Answer. With regard to No 1 car there is nothing at all to prevent the use of this car for any purposes of the election, including the conveyance of voters. Number 2 car presents a different problem. A person is here employed by the agent to drive a car, and this it would seem is an illegal employment, unless one stretched a point and termed the chauffeur as messenger.

We think it would have been a better arrangement for the candidate to have employed the temporary driver because the chauffeur's wages would have been a proper item of personal expense. There would then have been no objection whatever to the car being used for the conveyance of voters on polling day.

A Challenged Poll Card.

Question. The Tories have objected to our poll card. What do you think about it? Perhaps you can tell me whether the same is illegal and if so what I should do about the matter?

Below is a reproduction of the card mentioned by our correspondent, though the names given here are fictitious.

Answer. One or two cases have been heard in the courts in which poll cards have figured. In two cases the

card referred to contained a mark opposite one candidate's name, and at the foot there was a warning that if the ballot paper was marked otherwise than in the way the card was marked the vote would be invalidated.

This is probably the bee which the Tory agent had in his bonnet when taking objection to the card our correspondent sends to us. In this case it is true there is a mark opposite one candidate's name, but there is no suggestion that unless the voter marks the card in that way the vote will be lost.

There is a further point that one's poll card must not be framed in such a manner that it can be alleged to be a device to impede or prevent a free

exercise of the franchise. An inaccurate illustration, purporting to be a facsimile of a ballot paper, might be construed to be a device to impede the free exercise of the franchise. But if we look at the card illustrated and the wording attaching to it it is quite clear that it does not purport to be a facsimile, and no one could be misled as between two candidates by the fact that on the poll card one candidate's name is printed in larger type than the other. The difference is certainly considerable, but we contend that there is no possibility of any person being deceived.

These remarks perhaps might not apply if there had been any shortening of the description of the opposing candidate or any curtailment of his name.

Parliamentary Election, 1931—

Polling Day—TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27th
Polling Hours—8 a.m. to 9 p.m.

A. A. BREWER

Presents his compliments, and
begs to inform you that your
District is—

MARKET C

Your Number is—

and that you Poll at

Friends' Adult School

BRIAR LANE

HOW TO VOTE


1—Place a **X** in the square on the right-hand side of the Ballot Paper opposite the name **BREWER**, thus—

1	JOHNSON, T. J.	
2	BREWER, A. A.	X

Remember ! The **LAST** Name on the Ballot Paper

2—Do **NOT** make any other mark except a **X**

3—If you spoil your Ballot Paper, **ASK FOR ANOTHER**

 Take this Card with you to the Polling Station

Payment for Petrol and Ribbons.

Question. A point on which I am not quite clear about is whether I am allowed to charge to election account petrol for cars run on my behalf and ribbons for decoration of cars.

Answer. Our correspondent is not specific enough as to the use to which the cars were put. If the cars were used only for the conveyance of speakers and the general work of the election, or the candidate's or workers' personal use, the cost of petrol would be a legitimate miscellaneous charge. It is, however, illegal to pay out of election funds the cost of petrol or any other charge relating to the conveyance of voters to and from the poll. The law appears to allow a private individual to purchase the necessary petrol for the use of any car which he lends for the conveyance of voters but neither the candidate nor the agent must refund this expenditure.

As to the purchase of ribbons for decorating cars, this is an illegal expense, for the ribbon is obviously a mark of distinction.

The line between what is a mark of distinction and what is not is sometimes very fine. For instance, the purchase of ribbons for decorating a car or a Committee room window is illegal, but if curtains were necessary for the windows there is nothing to debar such necessities from being of the colour favoured by the candidate. It seems strange that one may legitimately buy curtains for the windows or dusters for the car but may not buy a yard of ribbon—yet such is the case in law.

An Agent as Nominator.

Question. Can an agent sign a nomination form at a General Election?

Answer. If the election agent or any other employee of the candidate is qualified to nominate in every other respect there is no disqualification to prevent their becoming nominators, seconders or assentors.

Can Sandwichmen be Legally Employed?

Question. Are sandwich-men legal during an election, including polling day?

Answer. What our friend refers to, we presume, is the employment of sandwich-men, for there is nothing to prevent persons becoming voluntary sandwich-men or sandwich-women. In-

deed volunteers for this purpose are not altogether rare.

The Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act permits certain specified employment and no other. It is permissible to employ one election agent, sub-agents (in counties) clerks, messengers, and polling agents. Sandwich-men are not mentioned. Some legal authorities lean to the view that provided the number of messengers is not exceeded sandwich-men may be numbered among them, and where election agents do directly employ sandwich-men it is customary to give them the status of messengers. There is, nevertheless, some risk in the matter and much the same remarks apply to the employment of bill distributors. However, the law permits the expenses of advertising and the expenses of issuing and distributing addresses and notices, and this being so an agent who instructs a messenger to distribute handbills, or to display placards on his person as sandwich-men do, is not stretching the law very far. Though there is some difficulty we incline to the view that sandwich-men and bill distributors may be employed as messengers. We are, however, dead against the view that such persons may be employed additionally to messengers, and as a separate class of employment.

Free Use of Schoolrooms.

Question. When application is made for use of schoolroom during an election and an absurd sum, e.g., the normal charge of one guinea is demanded, and a printed form is sent to be filled in which includes an agreement to pay this sum, it being understood that the school is only let under condition that the form is returned duly completed and signed; should this form be signed to obtain the booking when the matter is urgent, and there is no time to waste in letter-writing? In the event of the form being completed to secure the booking at once are the terms legally binding?

Answer. Our friend is up against one of the many difficulties arising out of the unsatisfactory provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1918, relating to the free use of elementary schools by candidates.

It would appear that in the country districts the parsons have been again at their old game in seeking to rob Parliamentary candidates in defiance of the Act now thirteen years old. Our friend's question gives no inkling as to how the form referred to comes to be

presented to the candidate's election agent. When the free use of a school is required the proper course is to serve a notice on the persons responsible for the booking stating that the school is required on such and such a date and at such and such a time for the purpose of a public meeting in accordance with the provisions of Section 25 of the Representation of the People Act, 1918.

It is helpful to add an extract of the Act and an undertaking to pay the necessary charges for cleaning, lighting and heating. Where a letter in the above terms has been served upon the persons responsible for letting the hall we are of the opinion that the full requirements of the Act have been met, and that any refusal to let the hall without sufficient reason should be followed by an action for damages. We dearly wish to see some Labour election agent take up this question by laying an action, where a refusal has taken place, or improper charge insisted on.

As to our correspondent's query we should say that the sending of the form such as he refers to in answer to a demand for the use of a room, is merely a trick to secure agreement to the payment of an improper rental. We think a person who signed such a form would be taken to have waived his rights under the Act. The law would not be likely to support an election agent who agreed to pay a price in order to obtain a hall and afterwards refused to honour his contract. It is better to refuse to sign such a document altogether, nor is it necessary to sign any undertaking outside the terms of the Act in regard to damage to premises, furniture, etc.

Since the Act of 1918 was passed there have been six General Elections and we refuse to believe that there are any parsons left who are ignorant of the provisions of this Act. The brief period of a General Election is the only opportunity Labour has in many parts of the country to hire a school-room at anything like a reasonable charge. The parsons see to this all the year round, and it is up to Labour agents to teach these pests a lesson when they have an opportunity. A Labour agent who pays an extortionate charge for a school-room during an election is an enemy in our midst. If this note reaches in time any of our readers who are faced with extortionate charges, we advise them to forward a reasonable sum as payment and to place any balance on the list of disputed claims.

(Concluded on page 213.)

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The Workers' Travel Association have instituted an interesting and unusual scheme for saving for summer holidays. You can save up during the winter, spring and early summer for your summer holiday in small or large sums either by weekly or monthly payments. When the savings are completed the W.T.A. adds a bonus to them. There is no need to book for a particular holiday when joining the scheme, or even to fix the date when you are going on the holiday. That can be done later. If you are obliged to postpone your holiday or withdraw your money, what you have saved will be returned to you. The scheme is simplicity itself. You write to the W.T.A. for particulars of their Holiday Savings Scheme, fill in the form they will send, and return it with 2/6 to the W.T.A. Head Office, Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1. You will then receive a book of paying-in slips and these can be taken to any local Co-operative Society or branch of any one of the "Big Five" banks. The amount available for your holiday includes your savings, the entrance fee of 2/6, and a bonus. Many interesting and cheap holidays, both at home and abroad are being arranged for next summer. It is not too soon to start saving now.

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A Vote for National Candidates is a vote for more "Cuts" in Wages and the "Dole."

BE ADVISED—VOTE FOR ROBERTS.



NO TAXES ON FOOD.

g Day, Tuesday, Oct. 27

NG WARD

Polling District **MM**

POLL AT

**ESTATE SCHOOL, OAK LANE.
(Boys' Dept.)**

**YOUR
POLLING No.
IS**

riffs :: ROBERTS :: No Food Taxes

RAMAGE

RAMSAY

ROBERTS

X



**The Poll opens at
8 in the Morning
and
Closes at 9 in the
Evening.**

**GO EARLY.
DON'T BE LATE.**



HOW TO VOTE LABOUR.

When you enter the Polling Booth state your Number and your Name to the Presiding Officer. He will then give you a Ballot Paper. Take it into one of the compartments and if you desire the success of **ROBERTS** put a **X** on the Ballot Paper opposite his name.

Do not make any other mark than a **X** on the Ballot Paper, or it may be spoiled.

If you spoil your Ballot Paper ask for another.

When you have marked your Ballot Paper as above, fold it and place it in the Ballot Box.

On leaving the Polling Booth go to the Labour Committee Room, state your Polling Number, then you will not be troubled with the Canvassers, and you will save their time calling upon you unnecessarily.

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(Concluded from page 209.)

The "Return and Declaration."

Question. There are several points about the election agent's return of expenses and declaration which I should like you to clear up for me. I have received £50 from the candidate and a grant from the Head Office, besides which our Party has raised a lot of money in small subscriptions. Have I to enter all these items on the income side of the return of expenses? Also have I to enter on the income side the amount of money the candidate has spent as personal expenses because I cannot make the two sides of the return balance unless this is done. Will you please instruct me also whether I have to alter the wording of the declaration so as to include not only the money which the candidate has paid to me but also the money which I have received from other sources. You might also explain what is meant by the following wording "now shown to me and marked—"

Answer. The law requires that the election agent shall return in the prescribed form a statement of all money or equivalent of money received by him from the candidate or any other person for the purpose of the election. Thus, strictly speaking, if persons have handed money to the election agent for the purposes of the election the whole of these persons should be enumerated in the return.

In practice, however, monies are not ordinarily paid by persons to the election agent, for his absolute disposal as the agent of the candidate. Rather they are paid to the Divisional Labour Party, who in turn guarantee either a stated amount of money or to discharge the whole or a proportion of the expenses. Where this arrangement exists and sums are being raised by the Divisional Labour Party it does not appear to us to be necessary to return in the election account the names of all subscribers; even though the election agent may have received money in his capacity as Secretary of the Divisional Labour Party. Normally, we should make out the account as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Received of the above named candidate	50	0	0
Received of the Labour Party, Westminster, London, S.W.1.	25	0	0
Received of the ——— Divisional Labour Party	200	0	0
	£275	0	0

Regarding balancing the two sides of the return it will be noted that the expenditure side may include an item "personal expenses of the said candidate paid by himself" and it may also include an item "personal expenses of the said candidate paid by his election agent." The two sides of the sheet will not balance, nor are they expected to balance, if there is an item under the first-named heading. It should be remembered that the return is the personal statement of the agent as to what cash he has received, and what he has expended. He is not therefore expected to enter on the income side money which he has not received from the candidate and which the candidate has paid out of his own pocket.

With regard to the declaration the form prescribed by law merely requires the election agent to declare the amount of money received *from the candidate*. If the candidate has paid no money to the election fund the word "nothing" should be written in. A declaration of this sort has surprised more than one returning officer, but it is nevertheless strictly according to law if it is strictly according to fact.

We have noted that at some elections both election agents and candidates have made the error of stating in the declaration the amount paid to the agent for his services instead of the amount paid by the candidate toward the election expenses. This is rather a silly error to fall into, but we have come across it several times.

As to the phrase quoted by our correspondent, the C.I.P.P.A. visualises the possibility of an agent or candidate swearing a declaration regarding a document which may afterwards prove not to be a true copy of the return which is filed with the returning officer. It is therefore required that the documents sworn to shall be marked in some peculiar manner for the purposes of identification. The election agent may mark the copy of the election return on which his declaration is based with any marking he pleases, and he may make the marking as private and personal as he likes (his own fingerprint if he likes). Nevertheless, the precautions enumerated are not altogether watertight.

TO OUR READERS.

In the coming years the "Labour Organiser" will play an important part.

Please recommend your friends to buy it!

PLAYING CARDS FOR PROFIT.

We have received from the "Daily Herald" a sample pack of "Daily Herald" playing cards.

These playing cards are of really excellent quality and thoroughly attractive. The famous cockerel is conspicuous on the back of the cards and will bring the users luck.

An offer is now made by the "Daily Herald" to the Movement to supply the cards at 7/6 per dozen packs, carriage paid, cash with order. It would seem therefore that Parties who order these cards can make an excellent profit from them, while at the same time doing a little propaganda for our only daily.

Enquiries and orders should be addressed "Daily Herald," 68, Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

DATA ABOUT MEMBERSHIP.

One Way to Stop Membership Leakage

The growing number of Parties with big penny per week memberships is naturally resulting in the discovery of new organisational problems and leading to the development of methods for dealing with them.

One of the problems which every Party which builds upon the sure foundation of weekly payments for its membership comes up against is that at the end of the year its collections fall a certain percentage short of the total which *should* be reached if every member paid his or her full dues. This is accounted for in a variety of ways, the principal cause being of course the excusing of contributions to out-of-work members and sick members.

This reason, however, does not account for the whole of the disparity, and in most Parties there will be also a definite leakage from a variety of causes. Organisers are beginning to apply themselves to ascertaining and analysing these causes for they appreciate that in reducing leakages to a minimum not only is income increased, but membership is consolidated.

The Southampton Labour Party is at present applying itself in this way,

and Mr. A. Rose, the Secretary and Agent of that Party, has, as a first step, compiled in detail the amount collected by the several wards in tabular form, and set by the side of these items the amount which should be realised if every member paid in full. In making this calculation, Mr. Rose has assumed that 15 per cent. is a normal margin to allow between the gross income and that which might reasonably be expected after making allowances for out-of-work members. This percentage is of course an arbitrary figure which will vary with different constituencies, but in making any calculation as to the total amount to be expected from members it would be wise to allow some fixed percentage in the manner described.

Therefore, in the figures presented in the following table it will be noted that the maximum amount due to be collected in each ward (column 3) is the gross sum less 15 per cent. It is reasonably assumed that the difference between the contributions actually paid and the reduced maximum is due to preventable causes, and endeavours are being made to find out what they are. Everybody with experience of the weekly collection of individual members' contributions knows that some percentage of loss is due to bad collecting—not necessarily bad in the way of being censurable, but from one cause or another calls are sometimes not made on members at the proper time, and collections suffer.

There is little doubt that an examination of the membership figures on these lines is bound to lead to the discovery of little weaknesses which if removed will tend to improve the results obtained. We heartily commend this system to other secretaries and agents with growing memberships. The total membership figures in Southampton speak for themselves, but we should point out that the total income from the wards stated in the table, falls short of the total income of the Party last year from individual membership. The ward total amounts to £218 17s. 10d. The income of the Party from this source was £239 18s. 10d., so presumably there is a central office income not included in the total.

We desire to add our appreciation of the kindness of Mr. Rose in sending in this table. The experience of Southampton is of extreme value to readers in other parts of the country.

SUMMARY OF MEMBERSHIP AND CONTRIBUTIONS, 1930.

Ward.	COL. 1.		COL. 2.		COL. 3.		COL. 4.		COL. 5.		COL. 6.		COL. 7.	
	No. Members.		Con- tributions paid.		Maximum payable less 15%		Estimated loss.		No. & Rate paid.		Average p.m.			
									Over.	Under	Nor'l.	1930	1929	
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s. d.
Millbrook	74	9	8	9	11	8	1	19	9	3	19	2	6	1 10
Newtown	32	5	6	6	4	10	...	...	...	7	8	3	4	2 10
Newtown W.S.	41	3	10	10	7	4	0	2	6	...	1	1	8	...
Woolston	26	1	11	11	3	17	5	2	6	...	...	1	2	...
Trinity	176	36	15	2	30	3	2	...	...	35	61	4	2	3 4
Trinity W.S.	142	21	3	1	22	2	6	19	5	14	62	3	0	3 4
Sholing	100	10	11	1	15	18	5	5	7	7	15	2	1	1 2
Freemantle	84	13	16	5	13	6	9	...	...	11	41	3	3	2 9
Shirley	102	13	13	2	17	1	10	3	8	13	21	2	8	2 7
St. Mary's	43	5	1	5	7	18	4	2	16	5	3	2	4	2 9
Pear Tree	204	26	0	11	35	17	5	9	16	18	28	2	6	2 9
Portwood	206	20	4	7	37	5	11	17	1	7	32	1	11	2 9
Northam	104	19	13	5	17	14	8	...	...	23	23	3	9	3 4
Bevois	44	4	12	1	8	2	2	3	10	...	...	2	1	2 1
Labour Club	80	11	10	10	14	14	8	3	3	10	...	2	10	...
St. Denys	107	10	19	3	19	2	4	8	3	1	3	2	1	3
St. Denys W.S.	54	4	18	5	9	8	10	4	10	2	3	1	10	...
TOTALS	1,619	218	17	10	275	17	7	66	16	0	433	2	8	2 2

Taken from complete membership records. Membership in respect of which our records are incomplete not included.

THE ENVELOPE SYSTEM WORKS WELL.

The envelope system of raising money is probably well known to a number of our readers, but we do not think this device is sufficiently made use of, and many more Parties might profit by putting it into operation.

During the late election the Loughborough Divisional Labour Party got the envelope scheme going well in several parts of their Division. In one small mining village alone the takings from the envelopes amounted to over ten pounds.

We reproduce below a facsimile of the front of the envelope used, together with the card of authority given to the collectors. We approve of the idea of giving this card to those who are to call for the envelopes, for not only has the presentation of a card a good effect, but the warning on the envelope that the collector must be the same one or someone bearing a card of authority, minimises the risk of money going wrong.

This envelope will be called for next week by the same worker (or, in case of need, by someone bearing a card of authority, which please ask to see).

**PAY FOR
YOUR OWN
POLITICS.**

Loughborough Divisional Labour Party.
Prospective Labour Candidate:
ERNEST WINTERTON.

Kindly place your contribution in this LABOUR ENVELOPE NOW, so as to be in readiness for the Collector when he calls. Seal the envelope.

CARD OF AUTHORITY FOR COLLECTORS.

This is to certify that

M.....
is authorised to COLLECT the LABOUR
ENVELOPES in connection with the
Labour Party's Campaign Fund.

.....
Chairman of Collecting Committee.

PREPAID ADVERTISEMENTS.

Advertisements under this heading are inserted at the special rate of twenty-four words for 2s., and 6d. for each additional six words, or less. Cash must accompany order. Three insertions are charged at the rate of two-and-a-half. Displayed advertisements, printed and threaded 5s. 6d. per inch, with special discount for a series.

J. D. MACKAY, 10, Bridge Street, Wick, Cheshire, will gladly repay postage, etc., to any reader who will send him samples of literature used in the Municipal Elections and the General Election.

WANTED.

Second-hand copy of Terry's "Representation of the People Acts, 1918-1928." Apply in first instance the Editor.

A reader desires to buy cheaply Volume I. of "Rogers on Elections." Apply first instance the Editor.

THE LABOUR PARTY

League of Youth

Monthly Bulletin

EDITOR :

W. ARTHUR PEACOCK.

No. 17 (NEW SERIES)

NOVEMBER, 1931

WAKE UP! YOUNG MEN

A TASK FOR LEAGUE MEMBERS.

IT would be foolish for us to attempt to deny our disappointment with the results of the recent election. At the same time it would be wrong of us to allow our disappointments to become our masters and to give up the job as hopeless. Labour fought the election under many difficulties. It had to face the vitriolic journalistic outbursts of its former Chancellor, the misrepresentation of the Press, the unfair use of the B.B.C. facilities made by its opponents, and the talkies. The last minute scare regarding the Post Office Savings Bank had the result the authors anticipated. The country was taken by panic and the National Government returned to power with an amazing majority.

Burying Their Talents.

The young men and women who read this journal have need to consider the position carefully. It is the younger generation and particularly the young women, who are responsible for the decision which results in the defeat of Labour. Led away by the wild and inaccurate assertions of Tory propagandists and the press, they have put their full faith and trust in the nominees of the National Government. They have believed all the silly stories regarding the programme for themselves. They have allowed their minds to be made up for them instead of exercising their talents and reaching a decision for themselves. They have made no attempt to understand the important issues confronting the electorate. They have failed to realise the seriousness of the situation. To-morrow they will realise the seriousness of their mistake and will bitterly regret that they were led astray by the meaningless slogans and misleading headlines of their daily newspapers.

It is the younger section of the community that will suffer most from the maladministrations of to-day. It is the younger generation that will have to bear the burdens that will arise from a continuation of the present state of society. It is they who have most to gain by the end of the present system and the introduction of the Socialist state.

Can we convince them of this? That is the question which the Labour Party must ask itself. That is the question which Leagues of Youth must consider. More than ever does it become necessary for a vigorous propaganda to be conducted among the youth of the community. More than ever is it necessary for the programme of the Labour Party to be explained in simple and concise terms that the young can understand. More than ever is it necessary for the League of Youth to increase its activities on behalf of the Party of which it forms a part.

Need of Education.

And not only must bold and vigorous endeavours be made to overcome the prejudice against Labour that bodies like the Primrose League and Junior Imperial League create, but a continuous educational propaganda needs to be conducted among the younger members of the Labour Party so that they may become more fully conversant with the case for Socialism.

The recent crisis has served to emphasise the necessity for our members understanding something of economics. Within our movement there exist excellent opportunities for such knowledge being acquired and of these members should take full advantage. League

(Continued on next page.)

The Annual Conference

DURING the next few weeks it is necessary for branches of the League to think out any resolutions that they may wish the Annual Conference to consider next January. Resolutions can be submitted dealing with:

1. Organisation (including development of membership, formation of new branches, establishment and activity of advisory committees, rules and constitution).
2. Educational (to include all forms of educational activities to be undertaken by the League).
3. Recreational (including development of sports side of movement, cycling, rambling, camping and foreign tours).

The last date that resolutions can be received in time for inclusion in conference Agenda is *December 5th*.

The conference will be held at Transport Hall, Smith Sq., London, on Saturday, January 9th, at 2.30. The basis of representation is two delegates for the first hundred members or part thereof and an additional delegate for every fifty members or part thereof where the Branch exceeds one hundred members.

Remember the Date.

Forms have been issued to secretaries and these should be sent to Transport House not later than January 2nd, properly filled in. Credentials are not issued until forms giving delegates' names are sent to H.O.

Among the business of the conference will be the election of a new advisory committee. Each branch is entitled to nominate one member for the National Advisory Committee. It is not essential that the person nominated should be a member of the branch submitting the nomination. It is necessary, however, that the person nominated be a delegate to the conference.

The last date for nominations is *December 5th*.

The meetings of the National Advisory Committee are held in London and it is desirable, consistent with securing a representative committee, to

elect persons residing within an easy reach of London owing to the expense involved in long journeys.

The social arrangements in connection with the conference are in the hands of the London Labour Party Advisory Committee. All delegates attending the conference and who are staying overnight should communicate as early as possible, and certainly not later than January 2nd, with Mr. Daines at 258-262, Westminster Bridge Road, S.E.1.

The National Advisory Committee is anxious that the conference be thoroughly representative and hopes that as many branches as possible will send delegates. In any event, should it not be possible to send delegates, then secretaries are asked to see that H.O. communications are answered in the usual way so that records may be kept up-to-date.

(Continued from previous page.)

of Youth branches must become centres of educational activity. In more than name they must be the training ground for the Labour Party workers of tomorrow. To accomplish their object they need to attract not only the interest of the young but must receive the encouragement of the older workers in the Party. Perhaps, in the past, the latter have not always been too ready to give their helpful hand. They have looked upon the Leagues as outside bodies rather than integral parts of the Party machinery.

The election, however, has shown the urgent need for the Party strengthening its educational propaganda. Our call, then, is to the members of the Labour Party League of Youth throughout the land. Arrange a really good winter syllabus now. Do all that you can to encourage your comrades to study Labour's programme and to make themselves efficient workers for the cause. Let endeavours be made not only towards making Socialists of young people but also towards making Socialists of those who already profess that faith. The misrepresentations of opponents must be answered. The case for Socialism must be stated. We must explain clearly what Socialism is and is not. The need is urgent.

Tommy Spence: The Martyr of Land Reform

By W. ARTHUR PEACOCK.

JUST near to the Holborn Empire there is a little passage known as "Little Turnstile." Had you gone along it during the days of the eighteenth century it is certain that you would have stopped at No. 8 and glanced at the books and pamphlets which were there on sale. For No. 8 Little Turnstile was the bookshop of Thomas Spence, a rather quaint personality who took an active part in the forward movements of those days, and who has been dubbed "the martyr of land reform."

His First Quarrel.

Thomas Spence was the father of many ideas that at a later day were associated with the name of Robert Owen. But while Owen secured the interest and the help of the rich, poor Spence received nothing but persecution. The police were always after him. His first propaganda work for land reform was done in Newcastle. There the corporation enclosed some land which had been let out for small farms. The freemen of the borough demanded the rent derived from these as dividends. The corporation resisted, contested the matter in court, and lost. The matter aroused considerable interest in the town, and the court decision gave rise to much excitement. This became increased when Spence delivered a lecture to the Newcastle Philosophic Society on "The Mode of Administering the Landed Estate of the Nation as a Joint Property in Parochial Partnerships by Dividing the Rent."

Spence denounced the existing system of ownership and suggested that what was needed was a system whereby "the land with all that appertains to it, is in every parish made the property of the corporation, or parish, with ample power to let, repair, or alter all or any part thereof." There were many landlords among the members of the Philosophic Society, and their anger was quickly aroused. They did not, however, quarrel with him on the spot, but at an early date expelled him from the society. Spence published his lecture as a leaflet and had it sold in the streets.

Unable to regain admittance into the respectable circle of the Philosophic Society, the enthusiastic land reformer came to London. He published pamphlets setting forth his point of view, wrote songs and parodies, held meetings, gave lectures, and conducted his bookshop business. The little Spencean Society that met in The Something and Lamb in Windmill Street, London, were not left to talk about their dreams alone. Police spies came into their assemblies, runners purchased literature from the bookshop, and brought it before a magistrate. Spence was arrested and imprisoned.

In the Courts.

His experiences in fighting the law are told in a pamphlet, "The Case of Thomas Spence, Bookseller." When arrested outside his bookshop he was hustled into a hackney carriage and driven to Bow Street. He had to wait in the court for three hours while the magistrate was having lunch. He was roughly handled, and the contents of his pockets, including a volume of Locke, were taken from him. He protested to the magistrate, and said no prisoner since the days of Bloody Queen Mary had been so badly treated. The magistrate justified the action, and permitted him to be questioned by the jury. Spence again protested, but without success. He was sentenced and taken to gaol. The officials who took him away ill-treated him and made him hire a coach. When the poor fellow refused, they threatened to take him through the streets wearing heavy chains. On arrival at the prison they demanded a shilling for a bed and a penny for a candle. His thirty hours in prison cost him twenty-four shillings.

On the occasion of yet another trial Spence took the opportunity of making a lengthy speech on his proposals. The case nearly went by default, for it came on much sooner than was expected. He arrived at Westminster Hall at the early hour of 8 o'clock in the morning and found, to his amazement, that his case was being heard. Such was justice in those days.

The Spencean propaganda did not arouse much enthusiasm, but the few men and women who were attracted by it regarded Spence as a hero. For years after his death his followers held a birthday celebration at which they sang:—

His books and songs for forty years
 He's published many ways,
 For which he oft was sent to jail
 Grant him your meed of praise
 And never let him be forgot
 Though he has gone from hence.

But though for forty years he wrote books and songs none is sufficiently clear to give a thorough outline of his scheme. It seems that he advocated the communal ownership of land. The freehold was to be vested in the local authority, who were to administer the land and share out the profits among the citizens.

A Queer Funeral.

In his last days Spence launched "The Giant Killer," a magazine specially devoted to land problems. It had reached its third issue when the editor died. His funeral must have been one of the most curious ever seen in London. In accordance with his instructions there was carried in front of the hearse a pair of scales containing an equal quantity of earth in each balance, to symbolise his innocence and the justice of his views. Inside the coffin were placed, also at his request, some coins.

One hundred and sixteen years have passed, and the poor bookseller is forgotten. Yet who will deny that there was much truth in his curious lines?

For men to be happy and social and free

The land must possess and as brothers agree,

The profits to share and the rents to divide

Then fight for it they will if they come to be try'd.

If the rights of men were established on earth,

No more then of slaughter, oppression, or dearth;

To do it is wanting but plain common-sense,

'Tis printed and published by Good Tommy Spence.

A capital life of Thomas Spence, written by Miss Olive D. Rudkin, is published by Messrs. George Allen and Unwin Ltd.

Organisation Hints

Upon past occasions we have paid tribute to the business-like methods of the Leeds Advisory Committee. A further instance is provided by the recently issued circular dealing with the winter syllabus.

This gives details of the dates when reports should reach the local Labour newspaper, when meetings and lectures will be held, together with information concerning cost of badges and literature that members should buy. In addition there is a list of speakers who are willing to address branches together with a note concerning the subjects in which they are interested.

A New Pamphlet.

Such a speakers' list ought to be prepared by each advisory committee, and local secretaries can help to keep the same up-to-date by posting any helpful information to the secretary of the local advisory committee.

A monthly circular such as the Leeds Advisory Committee despatches is of immense value. Local secretaries will also appreciate the pamphlet on "Organisation" that is shortly to come from the Labour Party Press Department. But for the election it would have been ready by this time. Prepared by members of the National Advisory Committee, it gives instructive hints on matters relating to all spheres of League of Youth activity. It should be a boon and a blessing to all League officials.

At winter meetings good use ought to be made of the leaflet outlining the aims of the League. We must have more members.

NOTICE.

"The League of Youth Monthly Bulletin" is issued by the Press and Publicity Department of the Labour Party. By arrangement with the "Labour Organiser" it is first published in the pages of that journal, from which it is reprinted for wider circulation.